

LIVING WITH ANIMALS

Brought to you by
William Pollak, DVM
Fairfield Animal Hospital
1115 E. Madison Ave
Fairfield, IA 52556

"Holistic & traditional approaches to support the best of animal health."

Available online at
<http://www.healthyvet.com>

Last updated on 12/7/2003

LIVING WITH ANIMALS

As a Veterinarian I am fortunate to meet with many different animals (and humans) everyday in health and disease, birth and death, fear and love, suffering and joy. As some animals die despite my best efforts and intentions, I have learned that I cannot take credit for the successes, nor blame for the failures. My well being, the basis of acting as an instrument of healing to the best to my ability lies in knowing that I am only a part of a larger scheme.

Beauty and all else, lies in the eye of the beholder. The world is but a metaphor, a mirror of our own interpretation. Animals are to us what we make them. Over the years, appreciation has grown in my dealings with the animal world and deeper perceptions about them and myself have arisen. In their world devoid of judgement, expectation and comparison, our thoughts rebound with unmistakable clarity, augmented by nature herself, in an attempt to give us the on going eternal reality check.

For humans, animals can mean many things; a nuisance in life, a source of food and clothes, a burden, companionship, a livelihood, a vital link to nature, all of these, since time before memory. The animals serve us, quietly, lovingly if we let them, in their unmistakable knowing of their link to the primal force of earth and heaven, for whatever purpose or meaning we conjure up for them.

For each of us awake to know it, how we treat animals (and other humans for that matter) shows us where we are; how we understand and feel about our relationship to our world. The world brings to our attention how we feel about ourselves and the animals bring it on home to a deeper level because of their unmistakable innocence. If we like how we feel about ourselves, then we like what we see in the world. If we don't like ourselves; we will not like what we see. This ongoing relationship of rebalancing continues on and on and on.

To judge another's relationship with THEIR world is a justification and an excuse for the lack we feel in ours; it is a futile attempt to satisfy ourselves by comparing ourselves to others' actions. Nature's judgement is what we experience right now. To judge another is a vain attempt to reduce our own fear by trying to control others and the world around us. It is like trying to cover up indigestion with more food-it works for awhile, only to come on later more strongly.

As a result of our attention on our fear, the fear grows for whatever excuse we use to avoid it, and it will come back. It is impossible to control the world around us and placate our fears; only slight, intimate modifications seem real for awhile. As long as our attention remains on the fear, the fear grows, returning in ever more ways displaying to us what we are creating in our feeling, thought and deed. Nature is aware of this as our feeling (almost deeper than emotion) is the power source for our stream of mind/heart activity.

We know our attention is on our fear not by what we think, but by how we feel. Animals are keen to this, knowing instinctively how we feel, without or in contrast to our verbal expressions. Our animal friends know this underlying energy flow, not by the "word thoughts" we project, but by the deep flavor behind the "word thoughts". This feeling is many times not as familiar to us as we think it is, our animal friends and our true human friends will remind us of our own feelings; gently, without judgement, and with unconditional love.

The style of living of our animal companions serves us well, both in their life and death. In their dying the deeper secrets of life are shared with us if we are awake to receive them. At the time of physical death, the body returns to it's home; mother earth, while the spirit escapes, created in thought, it remains as such, unbound by the restrictions and bounties of intimate connection with physicality.

Animals and the natural world (including humans) arise from cosmic laws that know only joy, playful activity, creativity, love and harmony. As a result, of this playful love, the world of diversity is ever bubbling in change, in the ever-present moment. The world viewed in the future or past mode (even more results of cosmic creativity) does not have to become the fertile ground of fear and insecurity. In the modes of playful liveliness the animals, plants, nature and humans are created with extreme exactness while overflowing in natural active love.

Death comes to the body of all sooner or later; it is a must of life, death is created at the time of birth. Death cannot be legislated against, but most human laws are exactly that; attempts to confine our fears of death by trying to modify the behaviors of others so we are not reminded of our own fears. Incarceration of others is a vain attempt by society to feel freer. The number of people in jails reflects the fears of the society that put them in. Restricting others is a crude attempt to feel freer; it does not work. Such attempts is comparison thinking; a rationality based on the falsehood that another's restriction is my freedom.

What we live each moment is the result of the silent natural laws of action and reaction at work. When we feel threatened (by the world, when in actuality it is our own ongoing creation), it is our interpretation, yet we continue to try to modify others' behavior so as not to be reminded of our own fear. In doing so for safety sake or for whatever reason, we strangle the flow of life that is our source. It is like dying many times before the body is dropped. Fear can never comfort fear; it only augments it. All we need to do is go beyond our fear, this is what the animal and plant do naturally.

Whether the animals are going to slaughter, going to eat or play, their sense of well being remains intact, as they know their roots here and in the worlds above. The animals have two feet on earth and two feet (or wings) in the heavens, unshakably. They live (and die) and let live (and let die). When we look into their eyes and see that unmistakable knowing expressed in their living we are reminded of our own well being. If someone looks into their eyes and sees their own pain and

suffering reflected back; and leashes out to the unconditional forgiveness and love for relief, it does not mean their pain must be ours, no matter what they do to try to reduce their discomfort.

We are part of nature as well as her source in embryo; our judgements vanish in appreciation of the world around us in knowing this source. We know we are living in the eternal present when our judgments, expectations and comparisons turn to appreciation, compassion and well being.

Objects in our view are seen as waves of gracious acceptance rather than points of fear regenerating.

Our animal friends provide us the mirror into which we can see the depth of our own nature. The opportunity of living with animals is a blessing and a gift in speeding our own awakening. As we internalize this, and make it our own, the sanctity of life will rise within us, and we will then see it around us; not for any reason to be argued with, or to be found in the surroundings, but just because we are living it. What another sees is for them to digest, and if we are shaken by our own interpretation of that, it is a reminder from nature that we are not moving down the road we have chosen for ourselves.